

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and further examination are requested. Upon entry of this amendment, the specification is amended, the abstract is amended, claims 1-15 are amended, leaving claims 1-15 pending with claims 1 and 2 being independent. No new matter has been added.

Specification

The specification and abstract have been carefully reviewed and revised to correct grammatical and idiomatic errors in order to aid the Examiner in further consideration of the application. No new matter has been added.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §101

Claims 1-15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Specifically, the Examiner states that claims 1-15 are not tied to a particular machine or apparatus nor do they transform a particular article into a different state or thing, thereby failing the machine-or-transformation test.

The claims have been amended to overcome this rejection. In particular, the claims have been amended to replace “means” with “member”. Therefore, the claims of this application are tied to a particular machine or apparatus.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In particular, the Examiner states that the limitation reciting “makes reference to the storage means according to obtained order and combination of the medicine information” is not clear.

Claims 1 has been amended to overcome this rejection.

Claim 2 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In particular, the Examiner states that the limitation reciting “calls corresponding

combination modification information from the storage means based on the obtained hash values to judge combination adequacy” is not clear.

Claims 2 has been amended to overcome this rejection.

Claim 2 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In particular, the Examiner states that the limitation reciting “case card file” is not clear.

Claims 2 has been amended to overcome this rejection.

Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In particular, the Examiner states that the limitation reciting “the combination adequacy judging means, and when combination of medicine which occurs combination modification is referred by the storage means” is not clear.

Claims 7 has been amended to overcome this rejection.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112, sixth paragraph

The Examiner states that the word “means” in claims 1 and 2 is preceded by the words “storage and combination adequacy judging” in an attempt to use a “means” clause to recite a claim element as a means for performing a specified function. However, since no function is specified by the words preceding “means”, it is impossible to determine the equivalents of the element, as required by 35 U.S.C. §112, sixth paragraph. Clarification and correction is required for the matters in items 1-5.

Each of these claims has been amended to overcome this rejection.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 3-8 and 11-14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yuyama et al. (U.S. 7,333,938) in view of Kircher et al. (U.S. 6,975,924).

Applicants submit that the claims as now pending are allowable over the cited prior art. Specifically, amended independent claim 1 recites a medicine management system, comprising a

storage member that stores medicine codes associated with respective medicines and combination modification information corresponding to a combination of medicine information which includes three or more medicines and is rearranged according to medicine codes, and information about presence or absence of occurring combination modification based on the difference of combination order with reference to medicine information.

In the present invention, as recited in claim 1, the medicines included in the prescription information may be, for example, medicine A, medicine B and medicine C, which are rearranged into one order (e.g., B, A and C), or any order of the possible six orders, including A, B and C or A, C and B, etc. Moreover, claim 1 is directed to a device in which only one combination modification information corresponding to this one order (i.e., B, C and A) is stored in the storage member. The system judges whether or not the data rearranged medicine included in the prescription information is stored in the storage member, and whether or not the combination of the medicines is correct based on the corresponding combination modification information.

In the present invention, as recited in claim 1, the combination modification information registered in the storage member is set to the medicines in which three or more medicines are rearranged in accordance with a predetermined rule. For example, in the situation where three medicines, medicine A, medicine B, medicine C are rearranged in the order of medicine B, medicine C and medicine A (i.e., B, C, A), all that is accomplished is storing the order of B, C, A, instead of the other five different orders including A, B, C or A, C, B and the like. Therefore, it is possible to reduce the amount of data that is stored. Additionally, the system determines by only one order, e.g., B, C, A, whether or not the combination modification is appropriate and the rapid process can be obtained.

The cited prior art fails to disclose or render obvious such a system. In particular, Yuyama discloses that injection medicines are rearranged in steps S31 to S33 (*see* Col. 7, line 66 - Col. 8, line 14), and the system searches whether or not the medicines, with which the modification order is determined, can be combined based on the existence or nonexistence of the combination of medicines registered in the non-combination data file. However, the non-combination data is the only data file in which the information about non-combination medicines is registered between the two kinds of medicines shown in Yuyama Table 2 (*see* Col. 2, lines 14-27). Therefore, Yuyama fails to disclose a combination judging member that rearranges the medicine information according to medicine codes stored in the storage member when three or more

medicines are included in the prescription information.

Additionally, Kircher fails to overcome the deficiencies of Yuyama. Moreover, there is no reasoning to modify Yuyama or Kircher such that the combination thereof would have rendered independent claim 1 obvious. Therefore, Applicants submit that independent claim 1 and its dependent claims are allowable over the cited prior art.

Furthermore, the claims dependent from independent claim 1 recite subject matter that further distinguish them from the cited prior art. For example, claim 3 is directed to unrewritable combination modification information that is stored in a master file, and new combination modification information that is stored in the case card file. That is, the regular combination modification information which is disclosed in the literature or the like is stored, while the combination modification information which is changed in an actual operation is stored. Additionally, dependent claim 7 is directed to the correct order, in which the combination modification does not occur, being displayed on the display member in an order that is different from the order of the rearranged medicine information about the order occurring the combination modification in view of the situation in which the combination modification occurs and the situation in which the combination modification does not occur.

The cited prior art fails to disclose or render obvious such subject matter.

Claims 2, 9, 10 and 15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yuyama in view of Walker et al. (U.S. 7,366,675).

Applicants submit that the claims as now pending are allowable over the cited prior art. Specifically, amended independent claim 2 recites a medicine management system, wherein when prescription information includes three or more medicines, the combination adequacy judging member calculates hash values based on the medicine related information stored in a storage member, and searches whether or not a hash value of the hash values calculated by the combination adequacy judging member corresponds to one of the at least one hash value stored in the storage member, and when the hash value of the hash values calculated by the combination adequacy judging member corresponds to the one of the at least one hash value stored in the storage member, calls corresponding combination modification information from the storage member and judges combination adequacy.

The hash function, in independent claim 2 of the present application, is directed to an

operation to obtain the value representing the data when data is provided, and the value obtained by the operation is the hash value.

In claim 2 of the present application, the combination of several medicines is identified as one hash value by using the hash function. The identified hash value is related to the combination modification information. Although three or more medicines are included in the prescription information, a single hash value is identified, and the combination modification information related to the hash value can be identified.

The combination of Yuyama and Walker fails to disclose or render this element obvious. Therefore, Applicants submit that independent claim 2 and its dependent claims are allowable over the cited prior art.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all of the claims now pending in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe there are any remaining issues that must be resolved before this application can be allowed, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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June 4, 2010